

Southwest Restriction and Closure Decision Checklist (4/08)

The following are questions to be considered when contemplating a fire restriction and/or closure. The factors that form the basis for the decision should be documented.

What is at risk?

- Public Safety
- Public and private property
- Natural Resources
- Infrastructure

What are you trying to achieve?

- Reduced human caused starts
- Public and firefighter safety
- Are there other ways of achieving your objectives?
- Consistency among agencies within the local geographic zone.

Are adequate fire resources available?

- Is there the ability to effectively handle initial attack?
- Are there enough engines, air tankers, helicopters, crews, etc., available?
- Are there enough Incident Management Type I and II teams available?
- Are decisions consistent with the local unit's fire management plan.

What is the predicted weather for the next several weeks?

- Will there be high winds of long-term duration?
- Will there be low relative humidity during the day and poor nighttime recovery?
- What are the expected temperatures (maximum/minimum); will there be minimum nighttime temperatures higher than 50 degrees F?
- What are the lightning predictions?

What is the daily fire occurrence situation?

- Are there multiple starts?
- Are fire occurrences and associated control problems increasing or decreasing?
- Are the daily fire starts more attributable to human cause or lightning/natural causes?

Is an increase/decrease in recreational visitor days, i.e., holidays and special events, expected?

What are the socio-economic considerations?

- Will there be direct and cumulative impacts on rural economies, industries, tourism, and authorized permittees?
- Has the right message been given to the public and other stakeholders to establish groundwork for restrictions/closures?
- Is it possible to minimize effects on the local community and users while achieving desired objectives?
- What is the wildland urban interface complexity?
- What is the public desire for recreation opportunities and events?

What actions are being taken by surrounding land managers and by local, state or tribal authorities?

What direction is in the land management plan for the affected area?

- Are there research natural areas or other special interest areas that may be affected?
- Are there wilderness or wild and scenic rivers that may be affected?

What is the workload associated with restrictions and closures?

- Will the workload associated with fire closures compete with fire management?
- Are personnel available to assist some users, such as outfitter/guides/ who may ask for assistance in moving their operations to areas of lower or no restrictions?
- Will refunds or fee reductions be appropriate for reservations, and certain uses and contacts?
- Are personnel available to provide public information and post the order on the ground and on the Internet?
- Are there adequate personnel for patrol and enforcement?

Will the restrictions/closure be enforceable?

- Is law enforcement involved early in the consideration of a restriction or closure?
- Will entry/activity permits be issued, and if so, in what situations and under what conditions?
- Is consistent and highly visible signage available?
- Is there a common goal with state and local agencies, adjacent national forests, and interior units?

Are there preparations for the next phase, whether that would be a higher level of restrictions, closures, or rescissions of an order?